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Wisconsin Local Employment & Unemployment Estimates Released

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates of unemployment and employment statistics for metro areas, major cities, and counties in Wisconsin. The estimates include updates for October 2016 and the preliminary estimates for November 2016. As these numbers are not seasonally adjusted, they are most appropriately compared year-over-year instead of month-over-month as rates often increase in the colder winter months due to the seasonality of the state economy. In brief, the not-seasonally adjusted estimates showed:

- **Metropolitan Statistical Areas:** Preliminary November 2016 unemployment rates decreased in all areas over the year when compared to November 2015. The largest over the year decline was 0.8 percent in Janesville-Beloit. The not-seasonally adjusted data also showed rates decreased or stayed the same in 11 of the 12 metro areas when compared to October 2016 rates. The latest rates ranged from 2.7 percent in Madison to 4.4 percent in Racine.
- **Municipalities:** Preliminary November 2016 rates decreased in all of the state's 32 largest municipalities when compared to November 2015. The latest rates ranged from 2.5 percent in Fitchburg to 5.4 percent in Racine. The not-seasonally adjusted data also showed rates decreased or stayed the same in 21 of the 32 municipalities when compared to October 2016 rates.
- **Counties:** Preliminary November 2016 rates decreased in all 72 counties when compared to November 2015 rates, and decreased or remained the same in 24 of 72 counties when compared to October 2016 rates. The latest rates ranged from 2.7 percent in Lafayette and Dane to 6.9 percent in Menominee.

The release of the November 2016 local rates follows last week's release of BLS monthly estimates showing a preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.1 percent in November 2016, maintaining its lowest rate since February 2001. The state also added a significant 30,400 total non-farm jobs over the year ending in November 2016.

Other indicators of the state of Wisconsin's economy include:

- Year 2016 initial UI claims are running at their lowest level since 1989.
- Continuing unemployment claims in Wisconsin are running the lowest in at least the past 30 years.
- Wisconsin's labor force participation rate outpaces the national rate by 5.7 percentage points.
- Wisconsin was one of only 10 states with an annual average unemployment rate in 2015 lower than 2007, the year that the Great Recession began.
- Wisconsin had the nation's twelve-highest percentage growth in average weekly private-sector wages from June 2015 to June 2016, according to state-by-state Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) data.